M 778 of the most disparate and incongruous objects, [22] white, black, or red clay, ngula /Ed., redwood powder/, chicken feet, heads, beaks, claws, and feathers, shells, palm nuts, etc., all mixed together in a large pot or in an old worn basket. It is from this magic treasure that the fetisher takes a pinch or two which he wraps carefully in a little bag and hands over to those who resort T [T71] to him. As for the human figurines so often found in the huts of the Bateke and Banfumu, we do not believe that they are fetishes. In our opinion, they are guardian figurines for children, carved before their birth and preserved until they reach marriageable age.

M 791 Some fetishers manage to gain quite a reputation, and their services are purchased for a very high fee. They are familiar ● 824 with the properties of certain plants, and they keep this knowledge secret and exploit it as much as possible. It would be wrong to believe that the fetisher's practices are all based on mystification.

M 278 695 Ebandia, the high chief of the Mosengere, knew the secret of certain poisons. He knew effective remedies for certain kinds of festering wounds; he proportioned the quantity of poison at ordeals so as to make its action violent or slow, and he was familiar with an antidote which cancelled out the effects of the poison.

M 278 695 684 A few hours before our arrival at Penge, Ebandia had subjected [23] one of his wives to trial by poison, on the mere suspicion that she might have gone too far with a native during a slightly prolonged stay in the forest. Ebandia accused her of adultery, prepared the beverage, and compelled the poor woman to prove her innocence by taking the poison. The unfortunate creature rebelled. A quarrel arose, and the village natives, when informed of the matter, protested against it, to no avail, however. The old tyrant carried out the ordeal. He had been notified of our impending arrival, and after allowing the unfortunate woman to suffer horribly for nearly two hours, he gave her the antidote. Five hours later, all the effects of the poison were gone. [Ed., the text is not translated from the last paragraph, page 23, to the second paragraph, page 26.]

T 764 [26] In general the natives have a kind of cult of the dead. In the Bateke-Banfumu region, the corpse is wrapped in fabrics. The more important the deceased person is, the larger the bundle. His whole wealth in fabrics goes with him to the grave. Prior

291/184 The nkásá is unknown beyond the Jwalé and the Lulaka. In that region the women tie a string (or a belt of beads) around themselves and attach a second piece of cloth to it.

291 Thus the male garment is a rudimentary sort of shorts, open on the sides, while female dress is much more open. In general the efufa is an appropriate protection of one's modesty, but it is inadequate in certain positions. (2)

[611] [196]

2. It may be interesting to note that etóo nsamányá, or just plain etóo, which is the term for a man's garment, also indicates the male line of descent, while the female line is often designated by the term nkásá (sometimes by the word jwómoto derived from bómoto, "woman"). Let us add that lonkundó jwá nkásá means "pure, flawless Lonkundo, not corrupted by foreign influences." This expression should be compared with the following phrases: langue maternel, moedertaal, "mother tongue," etc.

291/177 At present the nkásá is no longer worn except by a few elderly inhabitants of villages far from the main communication lines. Everywhere else the ancient mode of dress has been replaced by materials imported from Europe. The women wear at least a sangandmbo, a kind of short skirt which falls from their loins at least to the middle of their thighs if not further. Middle-aged men in the interior have simply changed the material of their garment but not its form. The younger ones, on the contrary, have frankly adopted the European mode of dress.

291/581 A married woman is not allowed to enter the village of her relatives by marriage (bakilé) or appear before them [54] without supplementing her usual attire with one or more belelelke (banana leaves cut into fringes). The term bakilé must be understood as it is meant by the Nkundó; it excludes those with whom the wife may sometimes perform the sexual act and who are called "husbands" broadly speaking.

[824] [831]

834 178 It goes without saying that the feeling of sexual modesty and its various manifestations among these people are being transformed by two different currents. On the one hand, their moral laxity is increased by their contact with all sorts of other peoples, by a greater freedom, by the partial emancipation of women, and by the attraction of the large centers and their luxury. On the other hand, there is the preaching of Christian morality, although its effects are still very slight and certainly do not counterbalance the influences mentioned above.

Article II. Preparation for Sexual Life

1. The Woman's preparation

893

When a girl wishes to indulge in pleasures of the flesh, she prepares her sexual organs in advance. The preparation itself consists of "opening the way" (lifola mbɔ́ka). This operation, which is repeated several times, is performed in hiding, preferably in the forest. The girl may or may not have companions with her who share her intentions. Each girl operates on herself. In order to gradually enlarge the organ, a girl uses progressively thicker shoots of the [824] bosáŋga or bokaakɔ́ plant (Costus afer), making sure first to remove the tip. Later these shoots are replaced by the lombɔ́lɛ́ fruit of the bɔ́ŋɔ́mbɔ́ plant (Aframomum) or, more infrequently, by a young manioc tuber.

This is the general practice; exceptions are few or nonexistent. It is followed because the girls want the event to which they aspire to occur without difficulty (bálota báfɔ́v'ɔ́keela).

893 515 In addition to this basic preparation, girls [65] also wash the private parts of their bodies. This is a cleanliness measure which they continue to practice save in exceptional cases for the rest of their lives. According to my informants, the native woman -- as a very general rule -- stresses this cleanliness as much for herself as for the sake of not repelling her husband or lover. When a girl begins to practice this personal hygiene, it is a sign that she wants to begin her sexual life.

832 in which they are manufactured, and consequently in the way they
[824] are used. The most common ingredients are certain leaves mixed with red rouge (ngɔ́la) and a sort of lichen which forms red slabs on the bark of certain species found in the forest; the whole thing is
[825] carefully wrapped in a small fur (especially the skin of the small feline iyɛ̌i).

The charm is hidden under a slat of the bed where the desired one takes her nightly rest. Because this is done an ardent love for the owner of the charm will grow in her heart. Or it may be placed somewhere in a hut; then the desired woman is called in, the owner of the charm takes her arm, and the efɔ́ndɛ́ immediately "turns her heart." Or, still without the woman's knowledge, the charm is thrown into the fire where she cooks. If she begins to sneeze when she returns home, this is a sign that the smoke charged with mysterious emanations from the philter has pepetrated through her nostrils all the way to her heart and filled it with ardent love for the Adonis in question.

The efɔ́ndɛ́ is considered an ikɔ̌ko, that is, a subjugation. Efɔ́ndɛ́ ákɔ́ka bǎmato, "the efɔ́ndɛ́ masters women, has power over
[824] them." The substance which prevents the efɔ́ndɛ́ from being efficacious is the bokai, a kind of sour vegetable. [102] The owner of the philter must abstain from eating it. For the bekai cause vomiting and if he ate any the woman would in the same manner eject her love and thus make the botɛ́ ineffective.

2. Bontálá

Contrary to the efɔ́ndɛ́, the bontálá is a love philter which is not available to everyone; it is a charm only for dancers of the iyaya. This does not mean that all the artists who perform this dance have it, but they alone are acquainted with it. The material basis of the bontálá, as of most Nkundɔ́ botɛ́, are the leaves of certain plants.

The efficacy of the bontálá is infallible. It acts not only on the beloved one, but also on any woman who involuntarily or on purpose fulfills the condition necessary to its operation. That is, as soon as a woman's head touches the arm of the possessor of the bontálá, her heart is moved in his favor; should she be married, her love for her

583 to leave her husband and he, in revenge, were to lay hands on her
431 mother or on one of the other wives of the clan. (1) [148]

1. See Chapter VI, Article VII, 4, (1), and Chapter VIII, Article II, 1.

7) Lombɛ̆: a wide shoulder strap made of fur or braided
[824] bekombe reeds (Calamus sp.), though valuables of equal worth (one knife or a konga) may be given. Nowadays this boéngo consists of 2 or 3 rings; it goes to the mother in compensation for the wearying burden of carrying and nursing her daughter. (1)

1. Note that when a mother-in-law brings a child into the world, her son-in-law sends her a shoulder strap of liengé otterskin or a konga of equivalent value. He does not repeat this gift at each birth, however.

[854] 8) Betɔ́tswɑ́ byɑ̌ nkwɑ́: leaves of the bonkongé bush used to remove, wipe off, and carry away (tɔ́ta) a child's excrement. This boéngo consists of a ring and goes to the mother as compensation for her performance of these tasks. In the absence of the mother, it is claimed by another of the father's wives or by a female relative of the mother.

[224] 9) The bojɑ́ngɑ́, "hunting net," is demanded in many villages for no special reason. Certain clans, however, scoffed at by others because they have few members, officially ask a man belonging to one of the latter and wishing to marry one of their daughters to bring a net, saying: "You make fun of us because we have no people; bring us a hunting net to surround and enclose us, since we are not many." Thus the village of Boyela of the Bakɑ́ala, never gives one of its members in marriage without this boéngo.

[184] 10) Wěngé w'ɑ̃́ɛkɛ́: a boéngo which is not known everywhere but which is customary in certain groups, for example among the Bakɑ́ala. One of the woman's relatives takes a piece of a young thorny trunk of the wěngé tree. Having scraped one end of it, he holds this

595* 554 On the day set aside for establishing the position of the bolɑ̃mbɑ̃, there is a great feast. All the clans and neighboring villages that have been invited gather at the home of the polygamist in question. He presents the woman to them and addresses the gathering: "Here is the woman whom I want to make my bolɑ̃mbɑ̃, as I have already announced to you. Today I am making public the decision I already made a long time ago. Be it known to all that no man may touch her, or he will be severely punished." Then two women (in rare instances, two men) hold the woman, and the husband unfastens her belt and rips off all her clothing. Then the assistants tie a rope or a belt of mpangɑ̃ (striped antelope) skin around her, and to it they attach various furs. From that day [292] until her death she may no longer wear the clothing (bitɔ̃o) of other women; she must always [350] be dressed in furs. Hence her name, bolɑ̃mbɑ̃ wa bikɔ́tɔ́, "bolɑ̃mbɑ̃ with furs." Then her husband gives her pots of palm oil with which she will have to cover herself. Two men approach her; they are chosen among the handsomest in the village (1) (married or single) and are

[609] 1. They are then (sic) relatives of the husband. Nkundɔ́ law dictates that no stranger shall perform a function of the slightest importance -- not even that of silencing a gathering. According to their saying, bofaya ɑ̃fɔ́tɛ́le lokɑ̃anga, "a stranger does not cut up a guinea hen."

[301] richly adorned with furs, belts of mpangɑ̃, beads, raffia fabrics with jagged edges, copper rings on their ankles, etc. Stepping in rhythm, they lead her to the house intended for her which is [351] [824] surrounded by a fence of bofeko posts (Ricinodendron africanum) held together with palms. This hut with its fence is called ileke.

There the bolɑ̃mbɑ̃ will reside for months and years (up to three or more, they say). She is secluded there, so to speak, [514] and may not go out. If she needs to go to the banana groves for her personal needs, she covers and surrounds herself with a mat so that no one will see her.

846 to be able to nurse the child together." This does not mean that
833 from then on they may have regular sexual relations, for these are not permitted until after the end of seclusion. But if they were to omit the act at this time, they would have to abstain from it until the child is weaned. The Nkundó say that the act is performed "only a little." For many it becomes masturbation; others withdraw before obtaining the effect of the act. In no case may the act reach its natural climax. The reason for this practice is unknown to me. Perhaps it is done in order not to molest the woman while she is in a painful condition.

The next day the ashes in the hearth of the seclusion hut
846 are swept out, and the fire becomes "ordinary"; anyone may use it and eat food prepared on it.

4) The umbilical cord is dried on the bolíkó (a tray or shelf) and then buried at the foot of a young banana tree planted for that purpose, preferably under a bonkoń tree if possible. The ashes and sweepings from the seclusion hut are thrown there. The banana tree is called nkíndá. (1) Its fruit may be eaten only by the child's

●[824]

1. This is a generic term used for any banana tree planted for a special purpose (a magical practice, a game, etc.).

[153] grandfather and grandmother. If another person eats it, he will be punished with a headache of a nervous type.

The umbilical cord is always buried in the father's native
946 soil. People who are far from home (laborers for the Whites, etc.)
614 preserve the umbilical cords of their children with great care in order to take them back [489] when they return to their village, or send them back when a favorable opportunity arises. The Nkundó hold to this usage tenaciously, because a person whose umbilical cord is not buried in the lands of his paternal clan has no authority in the group. The person involved would meet with the following objection: ntáokokúndela lokolé, ntákokundela lokoki, óyakúmya ngámo? olé nk'eyâya, "The lokolé was not beaten for you, your

846 taking the child would cause the child's death. The same precau-
789 tion is also in order if the husband goes on a trip before the child's birth and does not return till after the delivery

We have just seen that the harmful effects of the father's
946 misconduct on his child's life is effectuated through the father's
837 act of taking the child on his knees. Thus the Nkundó speak of baóngó b'ábé, "a father's bad knees," to indicate his reprehensible
[816] conduct, and they say that the bondandota potion is administered to the child so that it will not die because of the father's bad knees. (1)

1. The expression baóngó b'ábé is also used when an undertaking which requires continence is unsuccessful. (See Article II, 3).

When a child has painful and persistent diarrhea, it is often
753 interpreted as the effect of the father's infidelity. As soon as they
954 become aware of it, the couple separate for some time, and the father no longer touches the child. [492]

Contrary to what one reads on this subject about other peo-
837 ples of the Congo, Nkundó couples do not have to remain continent
834 beyond the period of seclusion. The separation ceremony gives the
789 husband back the freedom of action he had before his wife's pregnancy. For the wife the bokeka remains strict with respect to illicit relations until the child is weaned However she, too, may regain her freedom by having recourse to an antidote, the ingredients of which she purchases from a person who holds the secret. The ingredients are placed in a small antelope horn which is then stopped
[824] up by means of bolaká (resin from the Symphonia gabonensis). The interested party wears it about her loins on a string or a bead belt or, preferably, on a special creeper. This amulet protects the child's life from the harmful influence of the mother's acts of adultery, but it does so only on condition that she does not separate herself from the child, as we will explain further on. This procedure

862 does not really stop nursing till it is about two years old, and sometimes two and a half if it has a weak constitution.

Weaning is not accompanied by any ceremony or feast. In order to break the child's habit, the mother smears her nipples with the sap of the liféte fruit (a kind of small sweet pimento or [824] eggplant) or with a pimento-pepper extract (imbénga). Sometimes she leaves the child with some relative (daughter, sister, etc.) for a time [498] while she lives elsewhere.

As we have seen above, after weaning, the ekelé-bokeka period comes to an end for the mother, and her infidelities no longer have repercussions on the life of her child.

[853] 8) If the mother dies while the infant is still being nursed, [563] the task of nursing is turned over to some woman who is disposed to undertake it even a Botswa, and there always is one. After the child is weaned the woman is suitably recompensed. The use of [235] goat's milk is unknown.

854 9) Young children frequently suffer convulsions. This illness 751 is thought to be caused by hawks, and for that reason it is called [853] mpulú (bird). The Nkundó try to prevent it by hanging an amulet around children's necks; it is usually the clavicular triangle of a hen's carcass. In addition they know a remedy whose purpose is to strengthen the nerves: the child is laid on a mat stretched out anywhere on the roof of the hut. An eyewash (bolóf) is prepared from the sap of leaves from the litóyansombo bush and extract of mbólé (fruit of the bosoombó). Using a leaf shaped into a horn, a few drops are put into the child's eyes. Then the father or some other relative pulls out the mat from under the child and lifts it several times, shouting: tá tá tá.

856 10) No special importance is attached to teething. But a child whose upper teeth come in before the lower ones (a defect called ingondo) is considered abnormal. Therefore he is forbidden to eat the first fruits of hunting or fishing in an enclosure (mpao), lest the latter lose their productivity.

845 In other respects he is not differentiated from the other two. Greetings are not tripled in the case of triplets.

A child born directly after twins is called Wuteji (from utela, "to repeat"). He is in no way different from other children.

Article VII. Circumcision

Circumcision is generally practiced. It does not have to
304 be performed at any particular age. It is usually done during childhood before the tenth year. The more timorous put it off until puberty or even later. Special customs of individual clans sometimes set a time. Thus, a man of the village of Besombó is not allowed to be circumcised until he has killed an animal at the hunt. On the other hand, the season during which circimcisions are performed is specified: they must take place during the period when the water level is low.

The operation may be performed by any man who is expert at it. It is carried out behind the huts. No one but the boys being operated on and their fathers are present. The boys stand in a group somewhat apart from the proceedings but place themselves so that with their eyes they can follow the treatment to which their companion is being subjected. The patient squats. One of the elderly assistants places his hands over the boy's eyes so that he cannot see what is happening. The person performing the operation has already dug a small pit to catch the blood. He pulls the foreskin, ties it with a string, and then uses ashes to trace the line which must be followed by the empúte knife that is used on such occasions. When the blood has stopped flowing, he chews some bondóngó
[824] pepper (Aframomum . . .) or, preferably, [506] a caudal fin of
[825] the ngolo fish and then spits it onto the wound. The resulting sensation is very painful. But the patient shows that he is brave; for if he cries he is mocked by his companions.

As long as the wound is not healed, the boy must not use
[263] manioc leaves (bangánju) or manioc bread in the preparation of bosombó or lokito. Nor may he eat the skin, head, or tail of fish.

While the wound is healing, the boy who has been circumcised is cared for, washed, etc., by his mother or, if he has reached

202 so-and-so has died. Hours before his actual death, people everywhere know that a certain person is on his deathbed and that his death is imminent.

[100] If the witch doctor is up to his tricks of duping the silly Negro, people everywhere around know just what nonsense he is performing at what moment.

The White announces his morning and midday orders by means of the lokole and tells his workers when they may cease work for the day by the same means.

In the mornings and evenings and in the case of wet weather, the lokole carries especially far, but in the full sun it is not so effective.

202 534 The lokole is a large block of wood which is split down the middle for almost the whole of its length, and the inside part is carefully hollowed out. The lokole has the shape of an extra long, open mussel shell although, in general, the outside edges are flattened out.

322 The making of lokole is the trade of a certain person, and some Negroes are well-known for the lokole they have made.

Only four kinds of wood are suitable for the making of a lokole. [324] These are (1) Bokungu; (2) Likoso; (3) Bolondo; and (4) Isi. The last [386] is the most excellent kind of wood and the one used by the Mongo Negro to manufacture his "ngula" (red dye) with which he smears his body for even the least important event that occurs in his village. The Isi is probably a species of redwood. The Mongo Negro makes 322 five different lokole: (1) Ingonga, small in shape; (2) lokole ja losali, 534 medium size; (3) bongungu, large lokole. These three are all like the one described above. They are struck with sticks (bosolu) from the "momambo" tree (umbrella tree). (4) Bonkuka is the large, high lokole that is struck with two sticks to the ends of which are attached several balls of caoutchouc. The sound of these lokole carries for the greatest distance. (5) Ngomo is the large, oblong, upright dance lokole. This lokole is simply a large, oblong piece of wood, completely hollowed out, decorated a little, about 1.25 meters high, and covered at the top with a piece of dried antelope or leopard skin. It is struck with the fingers and the palm of the hand. This lokole is the well-known tom-tom, still used by the Negroes on the steamboats to announce their arrival in the villages along the river.

202 And now something about lokole language.

198 The beat of the lokole varies, and it is by this means that the Negroes [101] understand the different words. The tempo varies also.

no compulsion. If one of the contracting parties fails to fulfil its pledges in this matter of giving part of the kill, or in anything else, the aggrieved party may call the council together. This consists not only of members of the *mokoko* and *ekopa*, but of all elders of the village or villages connected with this particular one. The party judged in the wrong, whether *ekopa* or *mokoko*, will be fined, the injured party receiving its share, and both parties will be charged to live together harmoniously and observe their contracts.

The power of the *nkumu* was apparently limited, and did not supersede that of the *mosumu mokoko*. When trials came up, the aggrieved party might go either to the *mosumu mokoko* or to the *nkumu*. If it was necessary to call the village elders together about it, both these authorities were present at the hearing. First the young men of the group were allowed to give their verdict, then the old men, after that *mosumu mokoko* (or the *mokoni o ele*), and finally the *nkumu* was given the privilege of the last word. He would comment on the opinions of each of the judges, criticising one young man, commending another, and then giving his own verdict, at which the group would assent by saying, 'Even so, grandfather'. The whole group of judges would then fix the fines, a double portion of which went to the *nkumu*.

The actual manual labour which an *nkumu* may do excludes anything endangering life or limb, or requiring agility and speed. He may clear the bush for his gardens: this is a man's work. He may take part in the building of his houses, but may do no high work, and, among the inland groups, it is the work of the Batwa to put the roof on for him. The *nkumu* may also prepare pitfalls for catching game, but cannot engage in any other type of hunting or do any fishing. Digging a grave is prohibited, for, as we shall see, everything pertaining to death must be ignored by the *nkumu*.

Other rules affecting the daily life of the *nkumu* may be roughly divided into three: those affecting his person, those having to do with his food, and social regulations.

One of the great points of observance in the first class of regulations is the importance of the *mantsia*. The *nkumu* must on no account be seen during daylight hours with an uncovered head. If he wishes relief from the cumbersome *mantsia* he may take it off in the darkness of his house and put on an ordinary hat made of skins, and when night falls he may walk where he will bareheaded if he so desires. The skin hat, known as *londe*, may be made from two animals only, in the case of an *nkumu*, one being the *ndolopa*, a species of antelope with light-coloured hair, and the other the *jondo*, an animal resembling a beaver. The skin of the *ndolopa* may be used by anyone, but the *jondo* is reserved for the *nkumu* only with one exception. The skin of the *jondo* may also be used for the carrying strap for infants known as *nyumbu*, which is worn over one shoulder in bandolier fashion. For the *nkumu* the skin of the *jondo* is limited to the informal hat, *londe*, and for making into the *lokuta*, a pouch used for carrying small objects and worn like a sporran. As a corollary to the importance of the *mantsia* may be noted the importance attached to the head of the *nkumu*, which must never be seen uncovered in daylight.

The Bonginda *nkumu* never wash in the daytime, but may wash at night with hot water. The inland *nkumu* never wash. Even the Bonginda *nkumu* never wash their heads, and no *nkumu* ever cuts his hair. If the *nkumu* becomes too greatly inconvenienced, one of his wives may deliouse his head, but only within the privacy of the house, by the light that enters the rear opening.

7:Brown M-5 (ca. 1940) 1944 FO32 Mongo FO32
Ntomba

An *nkumu* can never walk alone, but must always be accompanied by others, and on no occasion whatsoever may he run. Even though he never washes, if he is out in the rain and sees everybody else hurrying for shelter, he will not quicken his pace. His movements must be slow and deliberate. The *nkumu* never sleeps alone; waking and sleeping he is attended by someone. But apart from this he is free to go where he wishes. The *nkumu* is not indiscriminate, as others may be, in his private habits, but must use his own latrine at all times, and if travelling must have his own latrine in each place where he stays. The inland *nkumu* frequently take advantage of this custom by hiding their accumulated brass rods at the bottom of a freshly dug latrine. Such hidden wealth will be acquired by an inheritor at the decease of the *nkumu*.

In speaking of himself the *nkumu* never refers to himself by his title but always by his own name.

The couch upon which the *nkumu* sits or reclines during the daytime may not be shared indiscriminately with others, but those permitted to sit upon it at the same time as the *nkumu* are *mumi*, women, and Batwa. The reservation of this couch for the use of the *nkumu* is not surprising, but the exceptions are. One explanation given was that women and Batwa are not *bato ba nu*, persons in particular; they do not count for anything in the social life of the community; they are not really 'people'. Another explanation was that they do not pay fines, this being tantamount to saying that they are exempt from laws and therefore cannot break laws even by doing what would be for others an illegal act. The stool of the *nkumu*, however, has closer restrictions in the manner of its use. Besides the *nkumu* only two others may sit upon it, *Nsumu* and *Mpenge*. It is always carried by one of his wives, though not necessarily by any special one.

The restrictions concerning the food of the *nkumu* are many. He may eat food only in his own house, or, if on a journey, in one given over for his use. He may not enter another house to partake of food even if invited to do so. Likewise the *nkumu* may not eat in the forest, or eat or drink anywhere along the road when on a journey, but must wait until he arrives at a village and has a house at his disposal in order to partake of food and drink. He never 'sleeps with hunger'; even if a wife or child should die causing him great sorrow he must partake of food before going to sleep. The Bonginda *nkumu* must never go into mourning, and death must be ignored by them, but the inland *nkumu* are permitted to mourn. All food carried to an *nkumu* must be covered, this rule even applying to water. Food must not be placed in a basket with high sides (*ekodi*), but in a shallow one (*mpale*), and no food that has been kept overnight in a pot may be eaten by him: swelling of the abdomen will result. Various foods are taboo, among these all fast-moving snakes, though slow-moving ones may be eaten; light-coloured palm-nuts may not be eaten, and a variety of yam known as *nsukidi* is shunned, for it is with the tough stems of the *nsukidi* that the dying body of the *nkumu* will be bound to ensure the sitting posture necessary for burial.

Among regulations roughly classed as social, we have already covered several in references above, and have referred to the *nkumu* in council. It may be added here that he is expected to agree with the majority of the councillors and not fall out with them. The rules affecting the *mpo* of the *nkumu* are accompanied by severe penalties. There must not be any fighting; if anger is aroused to the point of blows the antagonists

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Ntomba

grasping the knife with his left hand, with his free right hand he drains a gourd of palm wine to gain courage, hits the nearest victim on the head with the empty gourd, then transfers the knife to his right hand. He is now ready for his work which he proceeds to do methodically, sustained by the heady wine and the rhythm of the drum. When he had finished one of the lines, a pause would be made to bring out the body for burial. Just before this is done an armed band rushes down the path, returns, goes up in the other direction, then returns; this is said by some to ward off any spirits which might be about. The *nkumu* is now brought out by the Bawa slaves.[1] His grave, a circular hole with a crypt in one side of it, its entrance facing west, had been previously prepared. Few people in the Bongiada villages knew or had seen the actual burying place of an *nkumu*. While the corpse was carried to the grave followed by a crowd, the executioner finished his work. Those who stayed behind took the bodies of the decapitated men and women and divided them among all the participants of the funeral who would subsequently devour everything.

Accompanying the funeral procession to the grave were the *ndidi*, one or more men or women who were destined to accompany the *nkumu* to his grave and to the other world beyond. At the burial of an *nkumu* witnessed in 1950 at which the semblances of some of the old rites were carried out, a party of armed men contested the right of the procession to approach the grave, there was a mock battle for a few minutes between two bands of the funeral party, and then the procession gained right of way. At the grave-side the legs and sometimes the arms of one *ndidi* were broken by heavy clubs to prevent him from escaping. Then seated on the ground the body of the *nkumu* would be placed on the knees of this one, whose arms would be placed round the *nkumu* and securely fastened by driving a peg right through both wrists. Sometimes two *ndidi* were thus used. If the number of victims was sufficient, others would be buried alive too, being placed in the grave in the recumbent *mwanja* position, with the corpse on top of them, its weight being sufficient, with the earth filling in the grave, to prevent escape. The *nkumu* was now ready for burial and was placed in the crypt, facing west.[2] The relatives of the *nkumu* approach, they pluck the leaves and stem of a juicy bush known as *mokako* and chewing it, expectorate ceremonially on the body while they address it in language somewhat as follows: 'You are going to leave us now, we are mourning, for you were a good and wise man, your discernment in matters of justice was without parallel, &c. . . . we wish that you may be happy where you go, have *many wives*, beget *many children*, *lock* not for meat. But don't take with you our power to beget children, leave us also some of this wisdom of yours, for what you were, we would be.' This prayer over, the *mantale* would be slipped off the head of the corpse and replaced by the informal hat, all done so dexterously that the bare head was not seen. The entrance to the

[1] The body was supposed to have remained in state for seven to nine days, but actually it was buried privately some other time, a dummy being set up with the *mantale* on its head, and the surrounding ceremonies being conducted with only the dummy in the place of the actual body. The inland villages however did allow the body to remain unburied for the long period, the wives being forced to keep watch in the same house. The Bongiada buried their *nkumu* generally in their houses at the spot where they had been accustomed to rest, burying the dummy at some other spot further off.

[2] All burials have particular regard to this east-west position, those buried in the recumbent position having the feet to the west. The native explanation is that this allows the spirit of the departed to follow the path of the sinking sun.